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INFO AFRICAN UNION COLLECTIVE IMMEDIATE  
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C O N F I D E N T I A L PRETORIA 001018

FOR WHA DAS DAVID ROBINSON

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TAGS: [ETRD](#) [ETTC](#) [PREL](#) [CU](#) [SF](#)  
SUBJECT: CUBA: SOUTH AFRICA REVIEW FOR SUSPENSION OF TITLE  
III OF THE LIBERTAD ACT  
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Classified By: Political COunselor Raymond L. Brown for Reasons 1.4 (b)  
and (d)

- Has the host country, in Post's opinion, worked to promote the advancement of democracy and human rights in Cuba?

South Africa and Cuba were close allies during the anti-apartheid struggle during the Cold War and remain so today. Since 1960, Cuba not only provided diplomatic, political but also military support, with Soviet facilitation, for the liberation struggle in South Africa. Since the 1994 end of apartheid, Cuba and South Africa have been close partners, sharing positions in the UN, the Non-Aligned Movement and the Group of 77. Upon his release from prison in 1990, former President Nelson Mandela made Cuba one of the stops in his world tour. Cuban and South African leaders make reciprocal visits annually and have exchange embassies for fifteen years. From the point of view of the ruling African National Congress (ANC) and its alliance partners (the South African Communist Party and the Congress of South African Trade Unions), Cuba is a progressive democracy and strategic partner which practices an acceptable variant of a human rights culture. Indeed, South African leaders perceive Cuba as a victim of U.S. neo-imperialism and U.S.-based human rights, economic, and other abuses.

- Has the host country made public statements or undertaken other governmental actions, such as resolutions in the national assemblies condemning human rights abuses in Cuba; or actions in support of civil society in Cuba through host country's diplomatic missions or other fora?

The SAG President, Cabinet and Parliament have not undertaken actions or resolutions to condemn human rights abuses in Cuba. They annually vote in multilateral for a in favor of Cuba's resolutions and denounce U.S. policy towards Cuba -- condemning the U.S. embargo as an illegal and aggressive assault on the Cuban people. Also, the ruling ANC alliance and the Friends of Cuba Society carries out multiple demonstrations every year at the U.S. Embassy and its three Consulates in South Africa in support of the Cuba Five and against the U.S. embargo.

- Have there been any high-level diplomatic visits between Cuba and the host country in the past six months?

Yes. Defense Minister Charles Ngakula represented the SAG at the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) Ministerial in Havana in April 2009. After congratulating Cuba on the 50th anniversary "of the triumph of the Revolution," Ngakula then noted that South Africa has managed to "enjoy its freedom" since 1994 because of the "strong and unwavering support" of Cuba and the Non-Aligned Movement. He further said, "South Africa's principled position continues to be the lifting of the economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba. The

embargo continues to constitute a violation of Cuba's sovereignty and a massive violation of the human rights of her people."

In the 2009 annual national honors and awards ceremony, the SAG proffered its highest civilian honor ) the Companion of Oliver Tambo (in gold) award ) to former Cuban President Fidel Castro.

- What is the nature of investments (and names, if known) that host country businesses have in Cuba?

We have no specific details, but there are bilateral trade and investment agreements between Cuba and South Africa and there are reports of black South African businesspeople and Qthere are reports of black South African businesspeople and entrepreneurs that are believed to be investing in Cuba.

- Are there any bilateral trade agreements or other cooperative agreements between host country and Cuba?

Yes: The Department of International Relations and Cooperation (DIRC) maintains a website that, inter alia, provides information on SAG bilateral relations. Full diplomatic relations were established in May 1994, and the new post-apartheid SAG sent one of its first Ambassadors to Cuba in October 1994. In the interim, the SAG has fostered &mutually beneficial trade, economic, cultural and sporting links with Cuba.

President Castro made a state visit to South Africa in September 1998, and attended a NAM Summit in Durban. A Cuban Cabinet Minister attended the 1999 inauguration of former President Mbeki. In April 2000, Mbeki attended the South Summit in Havana and later made a state visit to Cuba in 2001 accompanied by six SAG ministers. During that visit, cooperation agreements were signed in Science and Technology, Arts and Culture, Sports and Recreation, Air Services and Merchant Shipping.

The DIRC website, unlike most its other bilateral relations pages, does not note specific bilateral agreements with Cuba. Post requested a list of those agreements from the DIRC and will transmit them upon receipt.

- Are there any exchange programs between host country and Cuba, including but not limited to: scholarships for host country nationals to study in Cuba; Cuban-paid medical travel for host country nationals; and Cuban doctors working in host country?

Yes: The first and third categories of exchanges mentioned exist between Cuba and South Africa. South Africa,s medical services industry is world class, and is a medevac location for USG overseas personnel in Africa.

LA LIME